

Good morning, Chairman Clemens and members of the Senate Transportation Committee. My name is Dawn Mayer and I am the Child Passenger Safety Program Director for the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH). I'm here to provide neutral testimony to HB 1148 relating to electric bicycles.

Electric bicycles can reach speeds of 20 to 28 miles per hour. Due to the faster speed and motorized nature of electric bicycles, they travel faster than conventional bicycles, which increases the possibility of crashes. Adding safety measures to this bill that are similar to other methods of transportation in North Dakota would provide extra protection for our citizens. These include:

- Setting a minimum age for those who can operate electric bicycles. North Dakota's motorcycle and motorized bicycle (moped) law requires a 14 year-old to obtain an operator's permit to ride a motorcycle or motorized bicycle. As HB 1148 is written now, a child of any age can ride an electric bicycle on a recreational path or road. Having a young child operating an electronic bicycle up to 20-28 miles per hour, and not understanding the rules of the road, creates a dangerous environment for the child and for any persons in and around their path.
- Requiring electric bicycle riders under the age of 18 to wear helmets; this would be consistent with our state's motorcycle rider requirement. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, children (5-14 years) and adolescents (15-19 years) have the highest rates of nonfatal bicycle-related injuries, accounting for more than one-third of all bicycle-related injuries seen in U.S. emergency departments.

This concludes my testimony. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.